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**BILL NO.:**           **HB 525**

**TITLE:**               **Outdoor Preschool License Pilot Program – Establishment**

**SPONSOR:**         **Delegate Guyton**

**COMMITTEE:**      **Education, Energy, and the Environment**

**POSITION:**       **SUPPORT**

**DATE:**              **March 22, 2023**

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 525 – Outdoor Preschool License Pilot Program – Establishment. This legislation would establish a pilot program to license outdoor, nature-based early learning and child care programs.

As many residents return to in-office work following the COVID pandemic, many still have trouble obtaining access to childcare services. Without proper access and availability of child care programs, parents are currently forced to choose between staying home with their child or attempting to find a more expensive form of child care. This prevents children from experiencing the benefits of education and socialization that early childcare programs have to offer.

As a father and a former educator, Baltimore County Executive John Olszewski is committed to ensuring that all children have access to quality day-to-day child care. HB 525 would establish a pilot program offering an alternative to pre-kindergarten education by allowing for the licensing of outdoor, nature-based early learning programs. These programs would not only provide parents with a more diverse set of options for their child’s care, but also provide the opportunity for children with otherwise limited access to open and green space to learn more about nature and enjoy time outside in a controlled environment.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 525. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).